

English E/IIIA Homework Activities

Pre-Reading Activities

Activity 1 Vocabulary

Circle the correct definition for the underlined words.

Score: ____ /10

- Humans have become the most powerful beings on earth.
a. (n) the state of existing b. (n) any living creature c. (n) someone's essential nature or character d. (v) -ing form of the verb "to be".
- Mr. Sato is the boss, but his assistants really run the company.
a. (v) to move rapidly on foot b. (v) to manage the activities or operation of something c. (n) a regular or scheduled trip or route d. (n) a brief trip made in order to get something
- Taking a nap in the afternoon helps me work the rest of the day.
a. (n) stopping movement or action b. (n) a time of calm and quiet after work or activity; a break. c. (v) to restore energy by relaxing or sleeping d. (n) the remaining piece or part
- Poison enters the food chain and becomes more and more concentrated as larger animals eat smaller ones.
a. (n) connected links of metal b. (n) a series of connected things or events c. (v) to secure or fasten with a chain d. (n) a group of businesses of the same kind that are owned by one person or company
- In parts of the Middle East, a dagger with a rhino-horn handle symbolizes power.
a. (v) to touch or examine with the hands. b. (v) to behave or operate in a certain way when used. c. (n) the part of an object used to lift or hold the object d. (v) to deal with; manage

Activity 2 Scanning

As quickly as possible, find the answers to these questions.

Score: ____ /10 (2 each)

- How many species of plants and animals disappear each year?
- What are "squirmies"?
- How many species have been found and named by scientists?
- How does the chemical DDT affect peregrine falcons?
- How much does a rhino horn cost in terms of an average worker's salary in Africa?

Activity 3 Skimming Quickly skim (read quickly and lightly) this week's article and mark any new words or expressions. In the chart below, write all the new words or expressions you marked. When you are finished skimming, look up these new words in your dictionaries and write the Japanese meaning. When you are finished with today's lesson, add these words and expressions to your Personal Dictionaries.

| English | 日本語 | English | 日本語 | English | 日本語 | English | 日本語 |
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Reading-in-Detail Activities

Activity 4 Reading in Detail Read today's article slowly and carefully. Try to understand everything in the article. When you are finished, **READ THE ARTICLE AGAIN OUT LOUD**. Do this several times to help you understand and remember new vocabulary.

Activity 5 Discussion Questions Once you have read the articles several times, think about the questions below. You and your group will discuss these questions in class, so prepare your own opinions and thoughts before you come to class. For the last two, think of two questions about the article on your own.

- What do you think are the most important environmental problems in the world/Japan today?
Which is the MOST important?
- How do these problems affect you and your life?
- How do your actions help cause these problems to happen?
- What do you do or can you do in your daily life to help overcome these problems?
- Have you ever used or bought products that use "recycled" materials? What?
- What do you think this world will be like 25, 50, 100 years from now? Would you like to live 100 years from now? Why/Why not?

7. _____ ???

Our Endangered Wildlife

Over many thousands of years, humans have become the most powerful living beings on earth. That power gives us a special responsibility. In this article, WORLD explores the impact humans have on the earth and on other living things that share the earth.

Before today ends, the last of some 45 kinds of plants and animals will die. A month from now, 1,400 more species will be gone. Within a year, the number of vanished species will total about 17,500. Scientists provide these estimates, which represent the most hopeful case. The actual numbers may prove to be much higher.

Among the vanishing species are African elephants. Ivory hunters kill the elephants illegally at the rate of about 200 a day. Farmers in overcrowded countries squeeze elephant herds into spaces too small to support them. Ten years ago 1 million elephants roamed the African countryside. Now perhaps 400,000 remain.



Loss of the elephant, nearly everyone agrees, would be tragic. Even worse, say scientists, would be the loss of smaller, often microscopic species. "It's the tiny species that really run the planet," says Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, a conservationist with the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. "Bacteria make digestion possible. Fungi give us penicillin and other medicines. Grass and other plants contribute oxygen. 'Squirmies' such as worms and termites are nature's recyclers."

Huge numbers of unknown plants and animals are also in danger. The earth, according to various estimates, supports between 5 million and 80 million species. Of these, scientists have found and named only about 12 million. "Species," says Dr. Lovejoy, "are disappearing before we have a chance to learn how they might benefit the rest of the planet."

Thousands of kinds of tropical plants could help feed a growing world population. About four out of every ten prescription medicines come from ingredients found in plants. Some animals also provide medicines.

"It's natural for species to become extinct over millions of years," says Dr. Lovejoy. "What's unnatural is that humans are speeding up the process many times over."

People are doing this in four main ways: destroying wildlife habitats, overhunting, introducing new species that endanger native wildlife, and polluting the environment. These activities affect all species in one way or another. "All life is interconnected," cautions Dr. Lovejoy.

Is there time to prevent disaster? Just barely, say scientists. Worldwide action will be difficult and costly. But scientists agree that action must be taken - quickly. The clock is ticking. . .

Threats to Our Wildlife

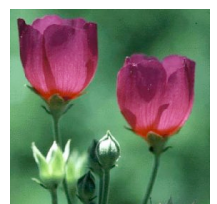
POLLUTION

Wind and rain spread poisons across the land and through the oceans. Some poisons take years to do their damage. The peregrine falcon almost disappeared because of DDT, a pest-killing chemical sprayed from airplanes. Once in the environment, DDT remains a very long time. It enters the food chain and becomes more and more concentrated as larger animals eat smaller ones. It causes birds of prey to lay thin-shelled eggs that break when the parents sit on them. After the United States banned DDT in 1972, more peregrine chicks began hatching. Now, slowly, the birds are making a comeback.



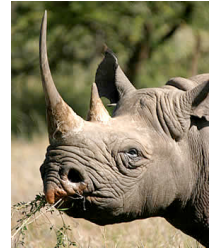
HABITAT LOSS

Most people have never heard of the Texas poppy mallow. This plant grows only in a few places in Texas, and only where there is a deep layer of sand. Now the mallow is in danger of disappearing. Construction companies that use sand for building have destroyed much of its habitat. The plant faces an additional threat from ranchers who plow it under to plant grass for cattle. When a plant disappears, animals that depend on it directly for food or shelter also suffer. In turn, species that depend on such animals are affected. All life, scientists say, is interrelated.



OVERHUNTING

Many people in Asia believe powdered rhino horn is powerful medicine. In parts of the Middle East, a dagger with a rhino-horn handle symbolizes power. Such traditions result in tremendous pressure to harvest more and more rhino horns. A single rhino horn brings a poacher as much as \$1,125 (¥123,750). In some of the African countries where black rhinos live, that's what an average worker earns in two years. The profits are so high that black rhino hunting continues in spite of laws against it. The species is now endangered. Other animals endangered through overhunting include the blue whale, the cheetah, the grizzly bear, and the mountain gorilla.



INTRODUCTION OF NEW SPECIES

When Europeans first saw the animals of Australia, they were astounded. The animals didn't look like those at home. Many were marsupials-pouched mammals like the rabbit-eared bandicoot. Australian animals soon got some unpleasant surprises of their own. The settlers brought in new species that competed for food and living space. Continents away from any natural enemies, the newcomers quickly multiplied, upsetting the balance among native species. Foxes hunted and killed bandicoots for food. Rabbits took over bandicoot burrows. Now, in its native land, the bandicoot struggles to survive.

